



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON DC 20310

Sexual Assault Awareness Month – April 2007

The Army joins the Nation and the Department of Defense in observing Sexual Assault Awareness Month in April. The theme for this year's month of observance, awareness, education, and call to action is – "Stand Up Against Sexual Assault ... Make a Difference."

Sexual assault is a crime, it is contrary to Army Values, and it degrades mission readiness. It has no place in our Army. Unfortunately, sexual assault continues to be the most underreported violent crime in the United States. While there is no evidence that sexual assaults are increasing in the Army, the number of reported cases continues to rise. Much of this increase in reported cases is the result of our growing emphasis on sexual assault prevention and response, which has created a greater willingness among victims to report incidents. However, the steady increase in reported cases demonstrates we have much more work to do to prevent this terrible crime.

Preventing sexual assault is the responsibility of leaders and Soldiers. Leaders must support the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program goals found in AR 600-20, Chapter 8. Specifically, leaders must reduce the risks of sexual assault in their units, implement prevention measures, and provide care for Soldiers who are victims. Likewise, Soldiers must stand up against sexual assault, live by the Army Values, and treat each other with dignity and respect. In essence, Soldiers must protect and take care of each other. By doing so, we will take great strides toward eliminating sexual assault in the Army.

We encourage everyone in the Army to take part in Sexual Assault Awareness Month observance activities during April. In doing so, we can re-dedicate our efforts toward reducing the risk of sexual assault, preventing this crime, and creating a climate of confidence in reporting. These actions will ensure care is responsive to all victims and offenders are held accountable. Together, we can make a difference. Army Strong!

Kenneth O. Preston
Sergeant Major of the Army

Peter J. Schoomaker
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

Pete Geren
Acting Secretary of the Army